

MINUTES
LINCOLN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MONDAY, APRIL 15, 2002

The Lincoln County Board of County Commissioners met in a joint meeting with the School Board, local Legislative Delegation, and various representatives on Monday, April 15, 2002 at the Lincoln County School of Technology, Bank of America Room, 1 Timken Drive, Lincolnton, North Carolina, at 6:00 PM.

Commissioners Present:

Jerry W. Cochrane, Chairman
Beth H. Saine, Vice-Chairman
Thomas R. Anderson, PE
Larry S. Craig
David P. Choate

Board of Education Members Present:

Jean Dellinger, Chairman
Sara S. Miller, Vice-Chair
Fred Jarrett, Jr.
Tony A. Jenkins
Tommy D. Houser
George L. Dellinger

Others Present:

Stan B. Kiser, County Manager
Jeffrey A. Taylor, County Attorney
Amy S. Long, Clerk to the Board
Leon Harmon, Finance Director
Kelly Atkins, Director of Building and Land Development
David Black, School Board Attorney
Dr. Jim Watson, Superintendent
Ed Hatley, Associate Superintendent
Dr. Elaine Jenkins, Assistant Superintendent
Steve Zickefoose, Assistant Superintendent
Penni Davis, Clerk to the School Board

NC State Senators:

David Hoyle
Austin Allran
Jim Forrester

NC House of Representatives:

Dan Barefoot
Joe Kiser
Mark Hilton

Chamber of Commerce

Ken Kindley, President
Dr. Marty Eaddy, Chairman

Economic Development Association:

Rhonda Hunter, Office Manager
Doug Core, Chairman

Invocation:

Rev. Mary McKey, First Presbyterian Church

Call to Order: Chairman Cochrane called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone present.

Dr. Jim Watson introduced Dr. Elaine Jenkins who gave a presentation on test data and trends in Lincoln County. Ms. Jenkins also spoke of ESL (English as Second Language) students.

Ed Hatley reviewed the School's critical needs for years 2002 – 2007. The total costs for these projects are estimated to be \$59.525 million. The additional capital outlay items are estimated at \$8.822 million. Mr. Hatley also introduced a 5 year building/preventative maintenance budget.

Teacher recruitment and teacher supplements were also discussed.

Steve Zickefoose presented the current expense funding information. The state average is \$1076 per child and Lincoln County is ranked number 66 with \$873 per child.

Leon Harmon presented figures concerning the percentage of the County budget that goes to schools, the school's appropriation, Medicaid expenditures, an analysis of debt for North Carolina counties, and debt service projections.

Stan Kiser, County Manager, spoke concerning school bonds and debt service. He also spoke of three funding sources, property tax increases, a new sales tax, or perhaps new impact fees.

Kelly Atkins, Director of Building and Land Development, and Barry McKinnon, Land Use Coordinator, gave a presentation on Impact fees and revenue that could be generated in this method.

Senator David Hoyle stated that the political reality of it is that we will never get an impact fee or transfer tax and it's highly unlikely that there will be a one-cent sales tax. He stated that there is a ½ cent sales tax that sunsets in July 2003. He stated that he feels this is the typical situation in most counties.

Chairman Cochrane stated that Lincoln County would just like to have their hands untied to control things in the county, because right now the only option is property taxes. He stated that he feels it is unfair to put all the burden on the property taxpayers in Lincoln County.

Representative Joe Kiser stated that there were a number of bills introduced last time for a local option sales tax, but they never even get out of committee.

Representative Dan Barefoot stated that the budget crisis facing the state of North Carolina is not going to get better next year, but probably worse.

Representative Kiser stated that one option would be allowing the schools to set their own tax rate.

Chairman Cochrane stated that he hopes the Board can work with the School Board and General Assembly to come up with a solution.

Adjourn: UPON MOTION by Commissioner Anderson, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.